EU Regulation of Wastes

Inception Workshop
Mercury Storage and Disposal Project in the Caribbean
Port of Spain
12-13 August 2015
General EU Rules for Waste Storage (1)


• Key piece of EU legislation in the field of waste disposal
• Stringent operational and technical requirements to prevent possible negative effects on the environment
• Not to be operated without appropriate permit by competent authority

*) notion „landfill“ = very broad, covers sites for waste disposal onto or into land
General EU Rules for Waste Storage (2)


• Application for permit must contain all relevant information
  - type and quantity of waste
  - capacity of the site
  - geological and hydrogeological characteristics
  - proposed measures for pollution control
  - monitoring and control plan
  - plan for closure and after-care of the site
  - financial security provided by applicant
  - environmental impact assessment (acc. to local conditions)

• Permit only to be granted if authority is satisfied with all elements

• Liquid waste not to be accepted in a landfill, but now derogation for metallic mercury
General EU Rules for Waste Storage (3)

2003/33/EC: Council Decision of 19 December 2002 establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

• Complement and particularizing of the landfill directive by detailed technical requirements
• Criteria for waste acceptable at landfills dedicated to hazardous waste*)
• Criteria for underground storage, including specific considerations for salt mines
• Long-term safety assessment required for underground storage
• All provisions of landfill directive as well as of criteria and procedures apply to a storage facility of metallic mercury

*) Metallic mercury as well as waste containing mercury is classified as hazardous waste under EU legislation
EU Criteria for Underground Disposal (1)

Council Decision 2003/33/EC establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- Criteria for underground storage
  - A site-specific safety assessment as defined in Annex A

- Importance of geological barrier
  - Ultimate objective of underground storage = Isolation of wastes from the biosphere
  - Wastes + geological barrier + cavities + engineered structures
  + technical aspects must fulfill the corresponding requirements
EU Criteria for Underground Disposal (2)

Council Decision 2003/33/EC establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- The site-specific assessment of risk requires the identification of:
  - The hazard (deposited wastes)
  - The receptors (biosphere and possibly groundwater)
  - The pathways by which substances from the wastes may reach the biosphere
  - The assessment of impact of substances that may reach the biosphere
EU Criteria for Underground Disposal (3)

Council Decision 2003/33/EC establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- An integrated performance assessment analysis, including:
  - Geological assessment
  - Geomechanical assessment
  - Hydrogeological assessment
  - Geochemical assessment
  - Biosphere impact assessment
  - Assessment of the operational phase
  - Long-term assessment
  - Assessment of the impact of all the surface facilities at the site
EU Legislation on Mercury Storage

Export Ban with Storage Obligation (2008)

refers to


affects on


giving details in

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Latin America Mercury Storage Project Inception Workshop - Montevideo, Uruguay, April 22-23, 2009